LIFE
Our Sign of Hope

There is perhaps no more beautiful celebration than when parents bring their newborn child to the waters of baptism. Parents, godparents, family, and friends share in this sacrament with incomparable joy. For in baptism, we share in Christ's death and resurrection, and through the outward signs of water and oil, are made *children of God* and given the hope of eternal life with Him.

"The death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope."[1] Through our Lord Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, death is overcome, and life is victorious. "Hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite not knowing what the future may bring."[2] Because of this Christian hope, we can face the unknown trials of life with faith rather than fear.

We are called to be signs of hope to all people, especially those whose goodness, value, and dignity are undermined. As members of the Body of Christ, we carry this hope with us as we continue Jesus' mission on earth. Pope Leo XIV encourages us, "How important it is that each and every baptized person feel himself or herself called by God to be a sign of hope in the world today."[3]

Sadly, there is a devastating absence of hope today. We see this most profoundly in a sweeping disregard for human life in its most vulnerable forms and stages. Abortion and assisted suicide are products of

"Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us." Romans 5:5

hopelessness and despair. Yet even amid the increasing attacks on human life, we know that the "storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death."[4]

We have been entrusted with a message of hope for the woman who finds herself unexpectedly pregnant or for the man diagnosed with a terminal illness. At these challenging moments, we must bring God's presence, witnessing to His love, and inspiring a renewal of hope in those whose hearts are burdened. For "hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross."[5]

Having been "buried with Christ in Baptism, we receive in his resurrection the gift of a new life that breaks down the walls of death."[6] Confident of God's presence within us, may we share the Gospel of Life with those most in need of hope, knowing that "the grace of God precedes and accompanies his people as they press forward firm in faith, active in charity and steadfast in hope."[7]

[1] Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 20.
[2] Ibid, 1.
[3] Pope Leo XIV, Vatican News, May 26, 2025: https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-05/pope-leo-xiv-africa-day-pilgrimage-blessing-vatican-basilica.html.
[4] Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 25.
[5] Ibid, 3.
[6] Ibid, 20.
[7] Ibid, 6.

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